United Nations S/2004/882

Security Council

Distr.: General
3 November 2004

Original: English

Letter dated 29 October 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to attach herewith the assessment of the work of the Security Council for the month of August 2004 (see annex).

This assessment has been prepared under my own responsibility following consultations with members of the Council, pursuant to the note by the President of the Security Council dated 12 June 1997 (S/1997/451) and should not be considered as representing the views of the Council.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Andrey **Denisov**

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Annex to the letter dated 29 October 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the Russian Federation (August 2004)

Introduction

Under the Presidency of the Russian Federation, the Security Council addressed a wide range of issues on its agenda including the situation in Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, Iraq, Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro), the Middle East/Palestine, Somalia, the Sudan and Timor-Leste.

In total, during the month of August, the Security Council held 10 official meetings and 13 informal consultations of the whole and adopted two resolutions and three presidential statements. The President made four statements to the press on behalf of the Council members.

Africa

Burundi

On Sunday, 15 August, the Council held urgent informal consultations, during which the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi, briefed the members of the Council on the situation in Burundi in connection with the massacre at the UNHCR transit camp for Congolese refugees at the town of Gatumba in Burundi.

The Council subsequently adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2004/30), in which it condemned the massacre with the utmost firmness, and requested the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General for Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to establish the facts and report on them to the Council as quickly as possible. The Council called upon the authorities of Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to cooperate actively so that the perpetrators and those responsible for the crimes could be brought to justice without delay.

On 19 August, during informal consultations, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, briefed the Council on developments in the region and said that, in the aftermath of the massacre at the Gatumba camp and following inflammatory statements by political and military leaders, there was a real threat of a spiral of violence in the region. He called for all actors to step away from the brink of war, to exercise restraint and to seek justice, rather than revenge.

On 31 August, during informal consultations, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations introduced the Secretary-General's first report on the United Nations Operation in Burundi (S/2004/682). He, inter alia, emphasized that there had been progress, albeit slow, in the implementation of the Arusha Agreement. The members of the Council stressed the necessity of holding elections

within the time fixed in the Arusha Agreement and the importance of the adoption as soon as possible of the post-conflict Constitution.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 4 August, during informal consultations, the Council heard a briefing by the Secretary-General on the outcome of the Accra summit on Côte d'Ivoire, held on 29 and 30 July. The members of the Council welcomed the Accra III Agreement, aimed at consolidating implementation of the peaceful settlement in Côte d'Ivoire, and thanked the Secretary-General for his personal contribution and devotion to the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire.

On 5 August the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2004/29) welcoming the Accra III Agreement and urging the Ivorian parties to remain committed to the obligations undertaken in signing that document.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 25 August, during informal consultations, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations introduced the third special report of the Secretary-General (S/2004/650) on the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). He noted that the main thrust of the document had been in producing a more thorough mandate of MONUC in the spheres where the Mission could offer real assistance to the transitional Government. Those were the strengthening of security through the creation of integrated army and police, and implementation of the programmes of disarmament of Congolese combatants and foreign armed groups which were still active in the eastern part of the country. Among the most important issues to be addressed in this context the Under-Secretary-General mentioned the unification of the country, the re-establishment of local administrative mechanisms, adoption of the basic laws and new Constitution, and holding of elections in 2005. Members of the Council took note of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report, and reiterated their full support to the Government of National Unity and Transition.

Somalia

During informal consultations on 17 August the Council considered the report (S/2004/604) of the Monitoring Group pursuant to resolution 1519 (2003) concerning Somalia. The report was presented by the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), the Permanent Representative of the Philippines, Ambassador Lauro L. Baja. On the same day the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1558 (2004), by which it extended the mandate of the Monitoring Group for a period of six months. In the resolution the Council also condemned the continued flow of weapons and ammunition supplies to and through Somalia in contravention of the arms embargo. It requested the Monitoring Group to continue refining and updating information on a draft list of those who violate the arms embargo, and to make specific recommendations for additional measures to improve overall compliance with sanctions.

Sudan (Darfur)

On 4 August the Council was briefed by the Secretary-General and by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Kieran Prendergast, on the Darfur region of the Sudan.

The Secretary-General informed the Council about his high-level meetings with 13 African Heads of State and the discussions which had been organized by the Chairman of the African Union (AU) on Darfur on the sidelines of the Accra summit. He informed the Council of his decision to send immediately a United Nations team to Addis Ababa, to work with the African Union on its requirements for the protection of AU monitors in Darfur. Describing the situation in the region the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General indicated that the actions of the Government of the Sudan had led to a positive development, namely, the broadening of humanitarian access to Darfur. The main serious problem with regard to which Khartoum was expected to be more consistent was the protection of the civil population, which could be accomplished only through the disarmament of Janjaweed and illegal armed groups and observance of the ceasefire by all parties.

It was acknowledged by the Under-Secretary-General in the course of the briefing and by the Secretary-General in his remarks to media following the briefing that, even if the task of disarmament could not be carried out in full within 30 days, in any case it would have to be started and carried out dynamically.

On 24 August, during informal consultations, the Council received a briefing from the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Tuliameni Kalomoh, on the situation in Darfur. After the consultations the President made a statement to the press, in which he stated that the Council members had extended their strong support to the leading role played by the African Union in addressing the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. They appreciated the work of the Secretary-General's Special Representative for the Sudan, Jan Pronk, in support of the objectives and decisions of the Security Council. They welcomed the Darfur Action Plan. The members of the Council urged the Government of the Sudan and all other parties involved to continue to cooperate closely with the African Union and the United Nations in seeking a resolution of the crisis.

Americas

Haiti

On 26 August, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council at informal consultations on the work of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the developments in that country since the middle of June.

Asia

Afghanistan

The Council held a public meeting on 25 August on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. The Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Jean Arnault,

who introduced the report of the Secretary-General (S/2004/634) and made a comprehensive statement and analysis on the current political, economic and social situation in Afghanistan. He emphasized that the provision of adequate security for presidential elections would be essential and required an increase in international assistance, including additional security deployment. He drew attention to the tenuous and volatile security situation in Afghanistan, which had seriously deteriorated in some parts of the country owing to the destabilizing activity of extremist forces, in particular Al-Qaida and the Taliban. He also referred to the lack of progress in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and in the implementation of the counter-narcotics campaign.

Council members and other Member States welcomed the report of the Secretary-General and the briefing of his Special Representative. They stressed that the Council should continue comprehensive efforts to assist the Afghan authorities and the international community in taking additional measures to prevent further destabilization of the situation and to ensure favourable conditions for the successful holding of presidential elections.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 11 August the Council heard a regular briefing on the situation in the peace process, presented by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who stated that there had been no tangible progress during the past month towards resuming the peace negotiations on any of the tracks. The Council afterwards held consultations, also on the Middle East.

On 31 August the President made a statement to the press, in which the members of the Council condemned the terrorist attacks in Israel that had resulted in the loss of innocent lives. They also condemned all other acts of terrorism, denounced the escalation of violence in the Middle East and called on all parties to continue the peace process in the region.

Iraq

On 11 August, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs presented to the Council the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) since 5 December 2003 (S/2004/625). Given its essential role in supporting the transitional process in Iraq, the Secretary-General recommended that the Mission mandate be extended for a further 12-month period. On 12 August the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1557 (2004) and renewed the UNAMI mandate for another 12-month period.

On 19 August the President issued a statement to the press, to the effect that the members of the Council paid tribute to the first Head of UNAMI, Sergio Vieira de Mello, and the 21 United Nations staff members who had lost their lives in Baghdad on 19 August 2003, expressed condolences to the families of the deceased and support to the United Nations personnel working in Iraq, in spite of all the difficulties and dangers.

On 19 August the Council was briefed at informal consultations by Ambassador Yuli Vorontsov, the High-level Coordinator on the issue of the repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals or their remains. He

presented the latest report on this matter and acknowledged that out of 605 Kuwaitis missing in Iraq after the 1990 invasion of their country 340 bodies had already been repatriated. Their positive identification would mean that in the near future about one half of the Kuwaiti and third-country detainees would find their final resting place. The number of those so far identified has risen from 92 to 167. Following the consultations the President issued a statement to the press, voicing the hope that Ambassador Vorontsov would soon be able to visit Iraq to press forward with his work. The President also welcomed the pledge of the Vice-President of Iraq, Ibrahim al-Jaafari, to assist in the search for those who remain missing.

Timor-Leste

On 24 August, the Council held a public meeting on Timor-Leste. The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations introduced the progress report of the Secretary-General (S/2004/669) on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). He noted that in recent months Timor-Leste had successfully assumed responsibility for its internal and external security and had adopted important legislation, while its public administration, law enforcement agencies and armed forces had all continued to develop. Preparations for Timor-Leste's first elections since independence were making remarkable progress. Having drawn attention to some significant problems Timor-Leste continued to face as a new State, the Assistant Secretary-General stressed that despite the progress achieved much remained to be done before the expiration of the mandate of UNMISET in May 2005.

The Council members welcomed the positive developments in Timor-Leste and underlined the importance of the continuation of sustained assistance from the international community to that country to provide it with the necessary means for the expeditious achievement of self-sufficiency. Representatives of a number of countries, mostly of the region, also made statements at the meeting.

Europe

Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro

At an open meeting on the situation in Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro, on 5 August the Council reviewed the report of the Secretary-General (S/2004/613) on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo and was also briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. He stated that, during the period since the mid-March violence, Kosovo had seen limited progress in some priority areas, but much still remained to be done to repair the physical and psychological damage that had resulted from that violence. Overall progress had remained fragile and serious concerns persisted. Kosovo's leaders and population faced an uphill challenge in moving Kosovo forward in the key areas of ethnic reconciliation, the strengthening of its democratic institutions and the creation of a democratic, tolerant and inclusive society.

During the discussion speakers regretted the setbacks caused by the March violence and the limited progress in key areas, including returns, equal security and freedom of movement for minorities, urged all the leaders of Kosovo to resume dialogue and efforts to move the standards implementation process forward, to implement all priority measures in the Kosovo standards implementation plan and to

translate into action their commitment to create favourable conditions for the return and integration of displaced persons. They further appealed to Serbs in Kosovo to participate in the upcoming elections to the Kosovo Assembly.

Other issues

International Tribunals

On 4 August the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2004/28) on the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, in which it took note of the reports submitted by the Presidents of the Tribunals to the Security Council regarding the implementation of the completion strategies, and reiterated its call to all States to intensify cooperation with the Tribunals.

Counter-Terrorism Committee

On 12 August, following consultations among the members of the Council pursuant to resolution 1535 (2004), the Council endorsed the organizational plan of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate that had been submitted to the Counter-Terrorism Committee by the Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate in consultation with and through the Secretary-General.